



# R. O. C. A. DIGEST

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF ROSEWORTHY OLD COLLEGIANS ASSOCIATION

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

IN THIS, the 75th year since the inauguration of ROCA, it is opportune to pause and take stock of the edifice we are building.

Are the foundations still sound; do we need to re-shape the original plan, and are we happy with the progress presently being made?

It seems the association has basically been a Fellowship or Club — a means whereby members are encouraged to meet annually to reminisce and generally have a good time in the company of the members known to them.

With about 120 members attending this function out of a possible 800-plus, it means 85 p.c. of members do not participate in the main function of ROCA; i.e. the promotion of good fellowship and unity among members. To overcome this deficiency, the ROCA Digest was established, the first issue being published just 10 years ago.

I am convinced that this publication has fulfilled the intention of the originators. It contacts members from New Guinea to Nairobi and helps unify the association. But it can be even more effective, and I urge any member with copy of interest to him (and consequently to others) to submit it without delay. How about it you South Africans?

What of the future?

A current survey shows that over the last eight years, about 48 p.c. of eligible students (those who have attended at least one academic year) become members of ROCA, and 84 p.c. of students finishing third year join. This latter is a healthy figure, but in the former case it is possible that many students are not aware that they could become members and the committee hopes to rectify this situation.

Finally, I would like to see ROCA doing more to stimulate and encourage members in furthering their knowledge of the particular pursuit they have chosen. The academic often reaps most of the awards, but there are many members not at this level who have much to contribute to the cause of advancing society's technical knowledge. All they need is some encouragement.

A sub-committee has been formed to examine this area and I look forward to a pragmatic recommendation.

Of the future, one thing is certain — the changes at Roseworthy during the last 75 years, great as they have been, will look small when compared with those of the next 75 years. The future of

ROCA is no less exciting. Can you imagine female Old Collegians? Well, you had better get used to the idea.

GEOFF NORMAN

#### 1971-72 COMMITTEE

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Four ordinary members: H. V. Stephen, D. D. Suter, M. Merckenschlager, R. G. Campbell

#### 1972 AWARD OF MERIT WINNER — MR. REX KRAUSE

A man largely responsible for the development of many of South Australia's currently recommended wheat varieties was this year's recipient of the Roseworthy Old Collegians Association Award of Merit.

He is Mr. Rex Krause, formerly of Roseworthy and now principal research officer (agronomy) with the SA Department of Agriculture.

Since Mr. Krause was appointed plant breeder at the College in 1952, many important wheat varieties have been released to SA farmers. Included in these are Sabre, Claymore, Glaive and Halberd. These varieties have had an important impact on cereal production in the State. For example, it has been estimated that Halberd would account for more than 50 p.c. of the wheat sown in SA this season. The yield advantage of this variety over others grown commercially in SA is about 15 p.c.

Mr. Krause was also responsible for the State's foundation seed multiplication programme for recommended oat and wheat varieties during his time as plant breeder at the College.

He was the 1964-65 Farrer Memorial Scholar, which enabled him to study wheat breeding and allied subjects at the Washington State University in the US. When he returned to Australia in February, 1966, he introduced a wide range of breeding material from the US, Mexico and Chile, which has been used widely in combinations with current Australian varieties.

In 1969, Mr. Krause was honoured by being one of two South Australians invited to attend an international conference in the US on mechanised dryland farming, with emphasis on grain production.

Receiving his award at the annual dinner in September, Mr. Krause said that until he took up his present position, he had spent all his working life at Roseworthy. "The College has done a tremendous amount for me, and I feel I owe it a lot," he said.

Mr. Krause said he had been president of ROCA in 1953 and 1954, when planning was under way for the College Memorial Chapel. "ROCA played a major part in the building of the Chapel," he said, "And I would like to see the association become involved in some similar major project."

Speaking of his wheat breeding work, Mr. Krause said tremendous advances had been made since he began work in 1941. "At that time we sowed about 1,400 plots with horsepower — today we have 8,000 plots, computers and other sophisticated equipment," he said. One of his first jobs in his position with the department would be to examine alternative crops to those presently grown in SA.

## RECORD YEAR AT RAC

With 158 students at the beginning of the year, 1972 was a record year for student numbers, the College principal (Mr. R. I. Herriot) said in response to the toast to the College at the annual dinner in September.

Mr. Herriot said Roseworthy was one of the few agricultural colleges in Australia to maintain its growth during recent years, and now that it was geared to take in 65 students every year, numbers would probably settle at about 185 or 190 — “about saturation point”.

A new, 70-room accommodation block had been recently completed, and the new kitchen and enlarged dining room were also near completion. Mr. Herriot said. A new library would be built during 1973, with a new chemistry laboratory for oenology students to be added in the same project.

Last year, after feeding the enlarged student population, the College had turned back \$110,000 to the Treasury against the running costs of the College, Mr. Herriot added.

Speaking of criticisms of Roseworthy's role in training farmers' sons Mr. Herriot said there was “no better training for fellows going back to the farm than the present RDA course”. He said the RDA was still the standard ticket from the College, and the entry standard was still five subjects in Leaving examinations, not matriculation as some people appeared to think.

He said that last year 60 p.c. of students were farmers' sons, as against only 30 p.c. as had been the case in many past years.

## GIRLS FOR ROSEWORTHY

Female students will be eligible to enter Roseworthy as from next year. Announcing the move at the annual Farmers Day on October 13, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Casey) said all female students would have to meet all the present course requirements, including those for practical work. The only stipulation was that there be a minimum of four female students.

Mr. Casey said the idea had been mooted on a number of occasions, but facilities had not previously been available. He said the move could “only be of benefit” in the long term, and added that he was confident that girls would enter the College in increasing numbers.

## COLLEGE CHATTER (from Cliff Hooper)

We have heard many reports of how bad the season has been, and you are all most likely wondering what the story is at the College, so I had better put you in the picture.

A cool October and early November has improved the outlook considerably. We cut 4,500 bales of clover and cereal hay which now gives us 16,000 bales in the hay shed. Also, 330 fodder roots were made in South 4; so the conserved hay situation is reasonably good, with 900 tons of silage also available.

The crops have hung on very well, and Ray Norton is now talking of up to eight bags of barley, eight bags of oats and eight bags of wheat: although some areas will be well below this, especially on the heavier ground.

Stock numbers have been reduced with thoughts of the tough period ahead. They are all in very good order at the minute and some of the sheep have enough fat on them to live on for a few weeks. The 71-bale wool clip did not show much effect of the season, and we only ask that prices stay up for another two months. We are still selling under the old system, but are having some micron testing done this year, which may give us a lead for the future.

We have been back in prime lamb production for two years, and this year sold \$1.638 worth — no high prices, but we at least sold all but seven of them.

Of main interest amongst the staff at present is the transfer in 1973 from Public Service to College employment. The RAC Staff Association has become quite active in this matter as we join a combined group of staff associations of Colleges of Advanced Education.

As Roseworthy will be considered on a different basis to teachers colleges, the Bill to make the change will be introduced into Parliament at the first session in 1973. It is anticipated that the administration of the College will pass to the College Council in January, 1974.

The social sub-committee ran a very, very successful RAC staff cabaret at Roseworthy on November 11. It was voted a great function by all, and many are looking forward to the next one.

In November, we saw the departure of another of the older-serving staff members. Jack Burrell, after 19 years on the College staff, decided to try his talents in another field. We will miss Jack's sense of humour around the College, and all of us wish Dot and Jack all the best in their new venture.

Terry DeLacy, assistant lecturer in Plant Science, has other ideas, and is the endorsed ALP candidate for the Federal seat of Wakefield. (This is news, not propaganda.)

Laurie Elliot, who worked on the farm in recent years, has retired and is now taking a world trip. In a recent letter to Ray Norton, he was heading by ship to Miami.

Another passing was that of Ray Norton's dog, Tiny. She had always been a regular traveller with Ray, and was the best indicator of his whereabouts. Now there is no dog to show us, so we don't know where he is — and can he disappear in a hurry!

I was asked if the staff had any reactions to the College going co-ed in 1973. They had all known about it for so long that the recent official announcement has not brought any response; although it has been suggested that certain staff members had better clean up their lectures. The rumour is that there have already been several applicants for 1973.

A recent letter from Peter Winter tells of his forthcoming posting to the Commando Unit at Middle Head in NSW. It should be an interesting post, as he is about to undertake courses in parachuting, canoeing, rock climbing, submarine duty and scuba diving.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(From John Bartlam, 316 Agnes Street, Rockhampton, Queensland, 4700)

As I have been out of touch with Roseworthy for some years, and am one of your more northerly and remote graduates, I thought a short letter may be of interest.

I run one of the largest farm machinery dealerships in Central Queensland, with a sales district covering an area roughly equivalent to Eyre Peninsula, and just as rugged. Fortunately there are a few patches of good soil, some irrigation areas, a high (if irregular) rainfall, and a thriving cattle industry.

Farm machinery sales have grown fairly rapidly over the last decade, and it is interesting to see the variety and sophistication of machines which are coming into general use.

Our franchises include many of the biggest and latest designs of machines currently selling in Australia. Just recently we delivered the largest farm tractor to come into the district (a Case 1200 TK with air conditioned cab and 16 ft. stick rake for ploughing and scrub clearing), the first automatic bale waggons, the first pto manure spreader and the first self-propelled corn harvester.

The trend towards more intensive cattle stocking with lot feeding in varying degrees becoming commonplace has caused a fair market to develop for mobile pto grinder-mixers, forage harvesters and self-unloading waggons. The area is also a big centre for hay equipment sales to the irrigated lucerne growers along the Fitzroy-Dawson valleys.

We have obvious problems, such as distance for service calls, high selling costs, complications for parts stocking for too many franchises, finding and educating service staff and an incredible phone bill. However, the competition does not appear to be quite so severe, and we have a good

future growth potential.

Aside from running the dealership, I am a partner in a coastal forest property which is being developed for grazing, cropping and certified tropical pasture seed production. This narrow coastal belt has a very high rainfall, fair soils, is relatively cheap to clear and as it has barely been touched yet by development, is cheap to buy. We think it should have a good potential for capital gains once people can see it can be successfully grazed with high stocking rates of Brahman cattle, using a mixture of tropical legumes and grasses.

We are moving a little way ahead of the local pace of extension work on tropical pasture establishment, but have the advantage of being able to study two well-established and very large properties in similar country 200 miles north near Mackay. Even so, an extremely wet 1971 summer taught us a few lessons on pasture establishment methods in low-lying country and showed us the value of a select group of pasture species. We had more than 6 ft. of rain during February and March.

It amuses me to think that 12 or 13 years ago, in desperation to find a suitable subject for my Agricultural Lecture, I fell upon a departmental bulletin on tropical legumes, which I reiterated parrot fashion to my unfortunate audience; who had to absorb such names as *Luchaena clauca* and *Dolychos lab lab* and other nastiness. Today of course, these species are no longer widely used, but rather legumes like Townsville and Schofield Stylo, Siratro, Centro and imported grasses like Kazanzulu setaria, Pangola and other highly productive species. are beginning to become to accepted things where pasture improvement is attempted.

Too much of Queensland, however, is still grazed as it was 100 years ago, on poor natural pastures and scrub country with complete exposure to the certainty of frequent drought losses.

Rockhampton is the third city of Queensland, and an important regional centre. Toowoomba is larger but does not have the concentration of Government offices that is found here and in Townsville. Coal is the big developer up in this area, together with the industrial expansion of Gladstone nearby. It is anticipated that Gladstone's population will exceed that of Rockhampton in 10 or 15 years, and the whole area generally will have fairly explosive growth, based around export coal and associated industrial expansion.

We just hope the current Australia-wide slump in machinery sales is only temporary, and that cattle prices remain as buoyant as they have been in recent years. We like living here, and as we are on the main tourist beat to the Barrier Reef, may see the more affluent of you during your winter holidays in the Sunny North.

#### RIVERLAND NEWS (from Ross Ford)

A most successful and enjoyable AGM and reunion was held by the Riverland branch of ROCA at the Winebarrel restaurant, Berri, on Wednesday, September 13.

Branch president, Mick Harwood, welcomed the 27 guests and members present. A special welcome was extended to president, Geoff Norman, who made a special trip from Adelaide for the occasion. Other guests included Milton Spurling and Terry DeLacy from the College staff, Ron Drynan (the ABC rural officer at Renmark) and a contingent from Renmark Growers Distillery – Elton Johnson (chairman of the board), Max Reynolds, Chris Weeks (a former RAC staff member) Tony Sheehan (sales manager) and Ray Ward (winemaker). Colin Glaetzer, also from the distillery, put in a brief appearance, but was only recently married and had other commitments. Harry Stephen, a regular attendee, again made the trip from Murray Bridge to be with us.

The Toast to the Association was in the capable hands of Jim Pocock from Lameroo. In responding to the toast, Geoff Norman outlined a number of ROCA activities, stressing points that should be considered by members. These included nominations for the 1973 Award of Merit and a membership drive to overcome the fairly static position of membership numbers.

Frank Kaesler proposed the toast to the College; and in responding, Milton Spurling outlined a

number of changes that have occurred in recent times. Some of the significant points were: students are mainly from the land and are of a higher educational standard than previously; the College is to become a College of Advanced Education; accommodation is now available for 190 students; the College teams had fared well in local sport; and basketball had replaced rifle shooting in the inter-College sports.

The election of officers was conducted on a 'democratic' basis; and congratulations to Nick Newland, who is our president for the coming 12 months. He will be ably supported by 'Uncle' Tom Symes as secretary/treasurer. Other office bearers are: K. J. Mack (Waikerie representative), P. Treloar (Berri), B. Hall (Loxton), T. Loxton (Renmark), D. Wasley (Barmera), G. Woodroffe (Wanbi), J. Pocock (Lameroo), M. H. Harwood (delegate to ROCA), R. L. Wishart (Proxy delegate), and R. J. Ford (Digest correspondent).

Just looking through the list above, I notice that Greg Botting's name is missing. How did you manage that, Greg?

The retiring president, Mick Harwood, expressed thanks to the Renmark Growers Distillery, which donated the wine for the evening (Renmano Cabernet Malbec), which was much enjoyed by all.

Richard Stewart, who has attended all reunions since living in the area, has now moved to Adelaide and is a member of the Extension Branch of the Department of Agriculture — all the best to you in your new job, Richard. While at Renmark, Richard worked with Trevor Twigden for Ian Tolley; Trevor was married in 1971, and went on an extended overseas honeymoon, returning earlier this year.

Congratulations to Rex Krause for his well-deserved Award of Merit selection.

Riverland members also extend their congratulations to Ken Hayman, who was recently appointed chairman of the Advisory Board of Agriculture for the next 12 months.

Roger Inglis returned home early in November after a five-month overseas holiday. Ross Clements was in the Riverland district recently. Ross is working for Boots Chemicals, and is stationed in NSW, although it is planned for him to move to Adelaide in April, 1973.

#### REMEMBER . . .

The Eyre Peninsula branch  
AGM, reunion and family day:  
February 24 and 25, 1973.

## IF FARMERS STRIKE (By Frank Pearson)

With apologies and acknowledgement to Edna Jacques, who published a poem in the 'Manitoba Co-operator' during the depression of the 1930's.

Although this poem also appeared in the Digest in 1965, it is presented again following a strong request and talk of farmer strike action among primary producer organisations.

I wonder what it would be like  
If all the farmers went on strike  
And just refused to plant a seed,  
Or prune a tree or pull a weed.

If staid old steadfast Farmer Brown  
Would dress all up and go to town  
To loaf around and shoot the breeze  
Or sleep beneath some shady trees.

And what would tiny babies do  
Under their coverlets of blue,  
If Mr. Grey just turned his cows  
Out in the pasture field to browse.

And went on strike for better pay,  
Or shorter hours for his day  
(That really lasts from sun to sun  
and yet his work is never done).

And what would hungry people eat  
If all our farmers grew no wheat  
Nor barley, mutton, lamb or beef.  
But just went living on relief?

Starvation ruin and disgrace  
Would stare the whole world in the face.  
I know that's what it would be like  
If farmers really went on strike.

